

-2-

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the paragraph spanning lines 4-12 on page 2, as follows:

Fig. 1a is a process flow diagram which illustrates the steps associated with a method of combating viruses. A process 100 begins at step 102 in which a system, *e.g.*, a computing system, operates. During the operation of the system, a determination is made in step 104 as to whether a virus has been detected within the system. In other words, it is determined if a virus has breached the security of the system. If it is determined that a virus is detected within the system, then drivers and/or data are downloaded and applied from an anti-virus website in steps 106 and 108. If it is determined that a virus is not detected within the system, then a determination is made in step 110 as to whether a specified time length has elapsed. The specified time length is a duration of time which passes before drivers and/or data on the system are updated, *e.g.*, by downloading current drivers and/or data onto the system.

Please amend the paragraph spanning lines 14-20 on page 2, as follows:

If it is determined that the specified time length has not elapsed, then the system continues to operate at step 102. Alternatively, if it is determined that the specified time length has elapsed, then drivers and/or data are downloaded and applied from an anti-virus website in steps 112 and 114. Typically, all new and updated drivers and/or data are downloaded. Once the drivers and/or data are downloaded, the downloaded drivers and/or data are applied, *e.g.*, by anti-virus software that is local to the system, the system continues to operate at step 102.

Please amend the paragraph spanning lines 10-29 on page 16, as follows:

After the virus type is characterized in step 402, a determination is made regarding whether an infection by a virus or viruses of the same type as the virus being characterized, or the characterized virus type, was prolonged. See step 404. For example,

-3-

if the current virus that is being characterized is a mass mailer type virus, then it is determined whether an infection caused by both the current virus and previous mass mailer type viruses is prolonged. Such a determination is generally made by studying the database in which virus profiles are stored to identify the date and the time of the first instance of the characterized virus type within the overall system, as well as the date and the time of the last instance of the characterized virus type within the overall system. The last instance of the characterized virus type is typically the instance of the current virus.